(c) if not, the facts thereof and time when this act was passed in U.S.A.;

(d) whether this act is meant for empowering U.S.A. administration with regard to nuclear issue; and

(e) if so, facts thereof and its impact on the 123 agreement?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) Yes. This Hyde Act, is enabling legislation passed by the US Congress and signed into law by President Bush on December 18, 2006 as part of its commitment under the 18 July 2005 Joint Statement, to amend its laws to enable the US Government to enter into full civil nuclear cooperation with India. Following the passage of the Hyde Act, India was exempted from the requirements of Section 123(a)(2) of the US Atomic Energy Act, 1954 that requires full-scope safeguards as a condition for civil nuclear cooperation with US. The Hyde Act is domestic legislation of the United States. India's rights and obligation regarding civil nuclear cooperation with the US arise only from the 123 Agreement that we have agreed upon with the US.

**Successful test of K-15 Missile**

†2228. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has made efforts to know reaction of other countries after successful test of nuclear enabled missile K-15 missile recently;

(b) if so, reaction of the major countries of the world; and

(c) the activities accelerated by Government after the said use, with regard to grant to 'nuclear State' status to India?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government monitor international reactions to developments impinging on our national security. No official statement by any other country on the test has come to Government's notice.

(c) Government are committed to maintaining a credible minimum deterrent with an indigenous missile capability as an integral element of that policy. As a part of our indigenous missile programme, tests continue to be conducted for a range of systems as and when required from the technological perspective. Government have no intention of getting drawn into an arms race.

**Protocol on exchange of prisoners**

2229. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SMT. SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the protocol on the exchange of prisoners between India and Pakistan is not working since Pakistan is interested to take back only hardcore terrorists;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether Pakistan's prisoners who are lodged in Indian jails for minor offences are not accepted to them; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the further reaction of Government on such stand of Pakistan Government on prisoners?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The present arrangement between India and Pakistan on grant of Consular Access and the release of each other's nationals in custody is governed by the provisions of the Protocol on Consular access of 2 November 1982. Government is concerned that 372 fishermen and an estimated 199 prisoners are in jails in Pakistan, many of whom have not been granted consular access despsite prolonged periods in custody.

(c) On occassion there has been delay in repatriation of Pakistan prisoners as travel documents were not provided to them in time by the Government of Pakistan.

(d) A new Consular Agreement is being finalised with Pakistan to replace the existing protocol to ensure expeditious release of and consular access to prisoners. A Judicial Committee comprising superior judges from both countries has been set up to address such issues.

**Capturing of Indian boats by Pakistan**

2230. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 343 Indian fishing boats have been captured and kept in custody by Pakistan Marine Security Agency (PMSA);

(b) if so, the action Government is taking to get the boats released;

(c) whether Government is contemplating to provide insurance or loan for the replacement of the seized boats; and

(d) if so, the component of subsidy and rate of interests on the loans by banks and financial institutions?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government are aware of 342 Indian fishing boats currently held by Pakistan. During the SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 4 April 2007, the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Shaukat Aziz had assured Prime Minister that Pakistan would take early action to return fishing boats seized from Indian fishermen to their owners. Government await the implementation of this commitment. The matter is being continuously pursued with the Government of Pakistan.

(c) and (d) On 27 September 2007 Prime Minister announced that Ministry of Finance shall liaise with the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) which has been designated as the implementing agency to develop a suitable soft loan package for the replacement of fishing boats.

**Indians in forced marriages in England**

†2231. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether forced marriages in England include Indians;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.